DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 096 643 CS 201 254

AUTHOR Mayfield, M. Kent
TITLE Three Plays from the Japanese.
PUB DATE Dec 73
NOTE 67p.; Ph.D. Dissertation, Walden University; Complete translated text of plays removed because of copyright restriction

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$3.15 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Art Appreciation; Art Expression; *Cross Cultural Studies; Cultural Awareness; *Culture Conflict; Doctoral Theses; *Drama; Higher Education; *Literary Analysis
IDENTIFIERS *Japan

ABSTRACT

This study is both an interpretation and a translation of three modern Japanese plays, providing an artistic perspective on the radical reordering of experience and thought with which modern man must grapple in cross-cultural encounters. An introductory essay prefaces each play, providing a historical, critical, or appreciative perspective from which to read the plays. Selections include: "The Golden Country," which tackles the theme of Japanese insensibility to Western concepts of God, sin, and death; "Vanished," which appears to be European both in the recognition of nihilism at the core of human life and in the appropriation of a Christian theology of hope; and "The Hour of the Rat," which attempts to revitalize traditions which have all but vanished from the surface of Japanese consciousness. The translations constitute an important part of the study. (Author/RB)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED 096643

THREE PLAYS FROM THE JAPANESE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
M. Kent Mayfield
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER

By

M. Kent Mayfield

B.A. Linfield College, 1960

M.Div. Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, 1963

M.A. Arizona State University, 1965

Jane Adelsberger

Jane Adelsberger, Ph.D., Advisor
Department of English
Avila College
Kansas City, Missouri

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Walden University
December 1973

CS 201 254

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

I. Statement of Assumptions 1

II. Statement of Purpose 9

PART ONE

...Of Mudswamps and Martyrdoms 12

THE GOLDEN COUNTRY (Ogon no Kuni) 25

PART TWO

... Of Nothingness and the Power of God 101

VANISHED (Yoake ni Kieta) 116

PART THREE

... Of Baths, Brothels and Hell 176

THE HOUR OF THE RAT (Nezumi Kozo) 195

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES 250

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ABSTRACT

THREE PLAYS FROM THE JAPANESE

By

M. Kent Mayfield

B.A. Linfield College, 1960

M.Div. Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, 1963

M.A. Arizona State University, 1965

Jane Adelsberger, Ph.D., Advisor
Department of English
Avila College
Kansas City, Missouri

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Walden University
December 1973

As Japan in her post-war emergence as a world power carries in her experience a collective suffering born of cross-cultural encounter, so the Japanese dramatic artist is peculiarly representative of the radical re-ordering of experience and thought with which modern man must grapple. It is the purpose of this project to translate three modern plays for study, performance and reflection, thus providing an artistic perspective from which to view the world.

In the first play, THE GOLDEN COUNTRY (Ogon no Kuni), against a background of seventeenth century Nagasaki and the persecutions of Jesuits, Endo Shusaku tackles the larger theme of Japanese insensibility to Western concepts of God, sin and death. VANISHED (Yoake ni Kieta) may reveal the wanderings of the soul of Yashiro Seiichi. The play is scarcely Japanese; its roots appear to be European both in the recognition of nihilism at the core of human life and in the appropriation of a Christian theology of hope. Sato Makoto's THE HOUR OF THE RAT (Nezumi Kozo) attempts to revitalize traditions which have all but vanished from the surface of Japanese consciousness.

The study is at once one of interpretation and of translation. An introductory essay prefaces each play, providing a historical, critical or appreciative perspective from which to read the plays. The translations themselves, however, constitute the major creative contribution of the study.

INTRODUCTION

I. Statement of Assumptions

> Only by conceiving art as a special direction, a new orientation, of our thoughts, our imagination, and our feelings, can we comprehend its true meaning.
>
> Ernst Cassirer (4:169)

For Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy, at the end of the nineteenth century, the arts were a major form of communication among men, "one of the means of intercourse between man and man." (13.49) Tolstoy believed that the arts permeated the whole life of man:

> All human life is filled with works of art of every kind--from cradle-song, jest, mimicry, the ornamentation of houses, dress, and utensils, up to church services, buildings, monuments, and triumphal processions. It is all artistic activity. (13:52-53)

Few people think of artistic activity in the broad sense used by Tolstoy. Even those who profess an appreciation of the arts do not necessarily understand this role of the arts in society. Even the artist may not consciously realize his significance. Often enough he seems to set his own standards in his art; he goes his own way and concerns himself with creating art which he sees as significant only to himself. Nevertheless, this selfness cannot be separated from the society in which he lives.

There is a story told of Pope John XXIII. He was sitting for the sculptor Giacomo Manzu. Manzu, a professed Communist and yet a great friend of the Pope, admitted the difficulties he was having in trying to find the inner core of His Holiness in order to instill this essence into the portrait. The Pope's

answer might apply equally well to the difficulties faced by the artist in his role in society:

> Yes, but there are confusions in any search. What matters is that you seek. Also that you love humanity. Otherwise, you wouldn't spend a lifetime creating it with your hands and your heart. (8:110)

It is in carrying out this search that artists can be regarded as responsive and delicate indicators of humanity. They indicate historic trends. Stability may be expressed in their work at times when men find stability in society, but in times of change, such as at the inception of a new epoch, artists are as responsive as "sensitive reeds that first vibrate to the new currents" flowing into any age. (2:94) Such an image is a suggestive one. Being the first to vibrate to directions of new thought, artists through their work orient the consciousness of men, changing its direction.

An example of this role of the artist in society is given by Jacob Bronowski. (3:55-60) He writes of the importance of the work of Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea del Verrocchio, and other Renaissance artists of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, in combination with the work of scientific observers, in helping to change the consciousness of society at that time. In studying the logic of various processes and structures hidden underneath the surfaces and appearances of things, the Renaissance artists helped to develop a completely new outlook and consciousness in society.

Though the arts are often regarded as another language of communication between men, the role of the artist and his work in effecting changes in the consciousness of society is a much greater concept of the arts than that of communication solely. Men may communicate, surely, but is it not also pertinent to ask about purpose or design?

Susanne K. Langer builds her philosophy of art on the concept that art communicates through "the creation of forms symbolic of human feeling: making men human and educating them emotionally to express the consciousness of themselves as human beings." (10:40) She states that:

> Above all...art penetrates deep into personal life because in giving form to the world, it articulates human nature: sensibility, energy, passion and mortality. More than anything else in experience, the arts mold our actual life of feeling. This creative influence is a more important relation between art and contemporary life than the fact that motifs are derived from the artist's environment. (10:401-402)

Langer goes on to discuss art education as the education of feeling, emphasizing that sociologists are missing the significance of the arts in looking solely to economic conditions and family relationships for the causes of "emotional cowardice and confusion" in society. (10:402) She maintains that even corrupt art has a pervading influence on man, that the arts profoundly affect the quality of life and are essential to an understanding of it.

This concept of the arts has been cogently set forth by Sir Herbert Read in his autobiographical fragments, to which he gave the expressive title, THE CONTRARY EXPERIENCE. Read believes that art has a fundamental relationship to a man's outlook on life. (12:82) Indeed, in "Arts and Peace," Read maintains the doctrine that art could cause violence to be set aside and eliminated from the hearts of men.

> No one knows how much grace we are given; but while a grain of hope remains, action is possible towards unity, towards mutual understanding, towards the slow process of learning to work together creatively, whatever this may cost in pride and self-assertiveness. (13:186)

Tolstoy writes that the aim of the artist is

> To evoke in oneself a feeling one has once experienced, and having evoked it in oneself, then, by means of movements, lines, colors, sounds, or forms expressed in words, so to transmit that feeling that others may experience the same feeling--this is the activity of art. (14:51)

By evoking what they experienced, Tolstoy believed men could use art to good purpose; he suggested that religious art of the future would train men in experiencing "the feeling of brotherhood and love." (14:51)

Hegel, too, believed firmly in the influence of the arts on the minds of men. He saw art as one of the three most important activities of human Geist, the other two being religion and philosophy. The German word geist is usually translated into English as "the soul" or "the spirit," but J. Glenn Gray, in his

introduction to an edition of Hegel's INTRODUCTORY LECTURES TO THE REALM OF ABSOLUTE SPIRIT, (7:3) and Paul Overy, in his study of the art of Kandinsky, (11:51), both agree that Geist, when used in such contexts, means also "the mind" or "the intellect" and is, perhaps, better translated into English as "spirit-mind."

Overy states that it is only a romantic prejudice to believe that the intellect has no place in art, the processes of perception and thinking being intimately connected: "One of the main aims of art is to 'tone up' the mind, to keep it fresh, active and relaxed so that it is capable of sudden reorganizations of concepts (insights)." (11:51)

Similarly, in his recent book, VISUAL THINKING, Rudolf Arnheim maintains that thinking is basically perceptual, since it is done in images which contain thought. He writes that, despite this,

> Our entire educational system continues to be based on the study of words and numbers...The arts are neglected because they are based on perception and perception is disdained because it is not assumed to involve thought. In fact, educators and administrators cannot justify giving the arts an important position in the curriculum unless they understand that the arts are the most powerful means of strengthening the perceptual component without which productive thinking is impossible in any field of endeavor. The neglect of the arts is only the most tangible symptom of the widespread unemployment of the senses in every field of academic study. (1:2)

In AN ESSAY ON MAN, Ernst Cassirer also observed that art is often undersold and that even its greatest admirers think

of it as a mere accessory of life and fail to recognize "its real significance and its real role in human culture." Cassirer further stated:

> Only by conceiving art as a special direction, a new orientation, of our thoughts, our imagination, and our feelings, can we comprehend its true meaning and function...Such art is in no sense mere counterfeit or facsimile, but a genuine manifestation of our inner life. (4:169)

Cassirer reasons that the purpose of the symbolic forms used by artists is to reveal meaning. Whatever the content of consciousness the artist might wish to imply to his audience, this content is embodied in sensuous symbols and relationships. There is a bond with a sensibility as a form of reference, Cassirer writes, but the content has a two-fold character, for it also contains within it a freedom from sensibility:

> In every linguistic "sign," in every mythical or artistic "image," a spiritual content, which intrinsically points beyond the whole sensory sphere, is translated into the form of the sensuous, into something visible, audible or tangible. An independent mode of configuration appears, a specific activity of consciousness, which is differentiated from any datum of immediate sensation or perception, but makes use of these data as vehicles, as means of expression. (5:I,57)

The artist thus creates patterns of expression in many ways and works not apart from but "in the same sphere with religion and philosophy," in Hegel's words, "bringing to utterance the divine nature, the deepest interests of humanity, and the most comprehensive truths of the mind. (7:29)

Further, in a society where man is becoming more and more dominated by the functions of an inhuman social order at the expense of the mystery of himself, the artist strives to keep man aware of what is happening. Northrup Frye speaks of the "frozen reflection" of the mind of modern man delineated by the imagination of artists. (6:46-48) This image, as it were, mirrors back to him the consciousness of his own sense of being, within the context of the consciousness of the society in which he is trapped like a fly in a cobweb. Hence the artist, like the surgeon, at times probes deeply and cleansingly, attempting to "tone up" the mind of man so that he will be capable of the insight necessary to effect change in the attitudes of society.

In an essay on the aesthetics of the avant-garde, Michael Kirby points out that the arts are no longer to be understood on a theoretical level. Rather, he suggests, the arts are integral to accelerating cultural change. "The most profound influences of art on life may be the least obvious. Thought that is caused, provoked, based on, influenced or made possible by an exposure to a work of art is one of the basic contacts with significance." (9:60) Kirby is particularly helpful in pointing out that art is effective precisely in its capacity to transform action by immediate confrontation.

Such confrontation is the peculiar province of theater arts. The plays which this writer has investigated provide portentious

and challenging models for human existence between two ages. In attempting to translate these dramatic works, the basic assumptions were two: First, that art is a form of high revelation; Second, that art can have a moral effect, as action rather than suasion. In the act of translation, of recreating a viable work of art, the translator seeks to explore the picture "that the contemporary imagination draws of itself in a mirror," (6:48) thereby challenging and restructuring the assumptions upon which he bases his own affirmation of meaning in art.

II. Statement of Purpose

> Human life is reduced to real suffering, to hell, only when two ages, two cultures and religions overlap...There are times a whole generation is caught in this way between the two ages, two modes of life, with the consequence that it loses all power to understand itself and has no standard, no security, no simple acquiescence...
>
> Hermann Hesse, STEPPENWOLF (1:75)

Certainly the mode of contemporary life is intimately linked with the impact of the technological revolution on existing ideologies and institutions. Not only in the West but in Asia as well the dominant pattern seems increasingly to be that of highly individualistic, unstructured and changing perspectives. Institutionalized beliefs, the result of the merger of ideas and institutions, no longer appear to many as vital and relevant, while the skepticism that has contributed to the undermining of institutionalized beliefs now clashes with the new emphasis on passion and involvement. The result for many is an era of fads, of rapidly shifting beliefs, with emotions providing the unifying cement previously supplied by institutions and with the faded revolutionary slogans of the past providing the needed inspiration for facing an altogether different future.

At such a time, aesthetics gains importance as the structuring of meaning out of the vast welter of human experience. Insofar as the artist is a touchstone of his civilization, mirroring in his works the experience of those who share his world, the models of existence which find expression therein are of substantial value.

As Japan, for example, in her post-war emergence as a technological world power, carries in her experience the collective suffering to which Hesse points, so the Japanese dramatic artist is peculiarly representative of the radical re-ordering of experience and thought with which modern man must grapple.

However, despite the popularity of Kabuki and Noh with Western aesthetes, works by contemporary playwrights are virtually inaccessible. It is the purpose of this project to translate three modern plays for study, performance and reflection, thus providing an artistic perspective from which to view the world.

In the first play, THE GOLDEN COUNTRY (Ogon no Kuni), against a background of seventeenth century Nagasaki and the persecutions of Jesuit priests, Endo Shusaku tackles a larger theme of Japanese insensibility to God, sin and death. Born in Manchuria in 1923 and brought to Japan in 1933, Endo, under an aunt's advisement, began attending a Catholic church in Kobe. After graduating in French Literature from Keio University, he spent some years in Lyons, studying the work of Maurice and other modern French Catholics. At thirty-two, he was awarded the Thirty-Third Akutagawa Prize for two companion stories. His numerous novels since that time have dealt with the cultural and religious conflict between East and West.

In a program note prepared for the original production of VANISHED (Yoake ni Kieta), Yashiro Seiichi designates the play as a mid-mark of his life as a playwright. After the play was written

and staged, he became a Catholic, adopting the faith of his wife and children. The play, then, may reveal his own wandering and his own agony in searching for peace. The play, superficially at least, is scarcely Japanese. Rather, its intellectual and cultural roots appear to be European both in the recognition of nihilism at the core of modern life and in the appropriation of a Christian theology of hope. The remarkable popularity of the play in Japan would indicate, however, its universal appeal and significance.

Sato Makoto is among Japan's youngest playwrights. He maintains a small theater group, and although somewhat limited, their dramatic adventures have continued in basement rooms, in the main halls of Buddhist temples, in coffee shops near the universities, beneath elevated super-highways and in crude tents set up in the courtyards of Shinto shrines. He repudiates the rules of orthodox dramaturgy and the technology of realism. He is noted for a peculiar way of telling a story--a careful blend of the gentle and the violent--and for his attempt to revitalize the tradition which has all but vanished from the surface of Japanese consciousness.

The study is at once one of translation and of interpretation. An introductory essay prefaces each play, providing an historical, critical or appreciative perspective from which to read the plays. The translations themselves, however, constitute the major creative contribution of the study.

PART ONE

...Of Mudswamps and Martyrdoms

Shusaku Endo has been called the Japanese Graham Greene. If this means that he is a Catholic novelist, that his books are problematic and controversial, that his writing is deeply psychological, that he depicts the anguish of faith and the mercy of God, then it is certainly true. Mr. Endo has now come to the forefront of the Japanese literary world, writing about problems which at one time seemed remote to this country; problems of faith and God, of sin and betrayal, of martyrdom and apostasy.

Yet the central problem which has preoccupied Endo, even from his early days, is the conflict between East and West, especially in its relationship to Christianity. Assuredly, this is no new problem but one which he has inherited from a long line of Japanese writers and intellectuals from the time of Meiji. Mr. Endo is the first Catholic, however, to put it forward with such force and to draw the clear-cut conclusion that Christianity must adapt itself radically if it is to take root in the "swamp" of Japan. His most recent novel, SILENCE, and the subsequent play, THE GOLDEN COUNTRY, deals with the troubled period of Japanese history known as "the Christian century"--about which a word of introduction might not be out of place.

Christianity was brought to Japan by the Basque, Francis Xavier, who stepped ashore at Kagoshima in the year 1549 with two Jesuit companions and a Japanese interpreter. Within a few months

of his arrival, Xavier had fallen in love with the Japanese whom he called "the joy of his heart." "The people whom we have met so far," he wrote to his companions in Goa, "are the best who have as yet been discovered, and it seems to me that we shall never find...another race to equal the Japanese." (6:31)

In spite of linguistic difficulties ("We are like statues among them," he lamented.) he brought some hundreds to the Christian faith before departing for China, the conversion of which seemed to him a necessary prelude to that of Japan. Yet Xavier never lost his love of the Japanese; in an age that needed to relegate to some kind of inferno everyone outside Christendom, it is refreshing to find him extolling the Japanese for virtues which Christian Europeans did not possess.

The real architect of the Japanese mission, however, was not Xavier, but the Italian, Alessandro Valignano, who united Xavier's enthusiasm to a remarkable foresight and tenacity of purpose. By the time of his first visit to Japan in 1579, there was already a flourishing community of some 150,000 Christians, whose sterling qualities and deep faith inspired in Valignano the vision of a totally Christian island in the north of Asia. Obviously, however, such an island must quickly be purged of all excessive foreign barbarian influences. Valignano, anxious to entrust the infant church to a local clergy with all possible speed, set about the founding of seminaries, colleges and a novitiate--promptly dispatching to Macao Francisco Cabral, who

strongly opposed the plan of an indigenous Japanese church. Soon things began to look up: daimyos in Kyushu embraced the Christian faith, bringing with them a great part of their subjects; and a thriving Japanese clergy took shape. Clearly Valignano had been building no castles in the air; his dream was that of a sober realist.

It should be noted that the missionary effort was initiated in the Sengoku Period when Japan, torn by strife among warring daimyos, had no strong central government. (6:571-578) The distressful situation of the country, however, was not without advantages for the missionaries who, when persecuted in one fief, could quickly shake the dust off their feet and betake themselves elsewhere. But unification was close at hand; Japan was soon to be welded into that solid monolith which was eventually to break over Asia in 1940. The architects of unity, Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and Ieyasu, were all on intimate terms with the Portuguese Jesuits, motivated partly by desire for trade with the black ships from Macao, partly, in the cases of Nobunaga and Hideyoshi, by a deep dislike of Buddhism (7:126), and partly by the fascination of these cultured foreigners with whom they could converse without fear of betrayal and loss of prestige. (6:585) Be that as it may, from 1570 until 1614 the missionaries held such a priviledged position at the court of the Bakufu that their letters and reports are now the chief source of information for a period of history about which Japanese sources say little. All in all, the optimism of Valignano seemed

to have ample justification. Yet, Japan can be a land of schizophrenic change, and just what prompted the Xenophobic outburst of Hideyoshi has never been adequately explained.

Quite suddenly, on July 24, 1587, Hideyoshi flew into a violent, drunken rage and ordered the missionaries to leave the country. "I am resolved," ran his message, "that the padres should not stay on Japanese soil. I therefore order that having settled their affairs within twenty days, they must return to their country." (2:148) His anger, however, quickly subsided; most of the missionaries did not leave the country. The expulsion decree became a dead letter. C. R. Boxer observes that within four short years there was "a community of more than 200,000 converts increasing daily, and Hideyoshi defying his own prohibition by strolling through the gilded halls of Juraku palace wearing a rosary and Portuguese dress." (2:153)

Nevertheless, the writing was on the wall. Ten years after the first outburst, Hideyoshi's anger overflowed again. This time it was occasioned by the pilot of a stranded Spanish ship who, in a great effort to impress the Japanese, boasted that the greatness of the Spanish Empire, was partly due to the missionaries who always prepared the way for the armed forces of the Spanish king. (7:131) When this news was brought to Hideyoshi, he was enraged and ordered the immediate execution of a group of Christian missionaries. Consequently, twenty-six, Japanese and

European, were crucified on a cold winter's morning in February 1597. Today, not far from the Nagasaki railroad station, there stands a monument to commemorate the spot where they died.

Missionary work somehow continued, however, with the Jesuits apprehensive but still in favor at the royal court. It was only under Hideyoshi's successor, Ieyasu, the first of the Tokugawas, that the death sentence of the mission became irrevocable. From the beginning, Ieyasu was none too friendly toward Christianity, though he tolerated the missionaries for the sake of the silk trade with Macao. But there things were changing: the English and the Dutch had arrived. Nor was it long until the role of interpreter and conficant was transferred from the Portuguese Jesuits to the English Will Adams, who lost no time in assuring the shogun that many European monarchs distrusted these meddlesome priests and expelled them from their kingdoms. (6:596) Ieyasu evinced the greatest interest in the religious conflict that was rending Europe, questioning the English and the Dutch about it again and again. At the same time, his apprehension grew as he observed the unquestioning obedience of his Christian subjects to their foreign guides.

Thus, finally, in 1614 the edict of expulsion was promulgated declaring:

> The Kirishitan band have come to Japan... longing to disseminate an evil law, to overthrow true doctrine, so that they may change the government of the country and obtain possession of the land. This is the germ of a great disaster, and must be crushed. (2:318)

This was a death blow. It came at a time when there were about 300,000 Christians in Japan, in addition to colleges, seminaries, hospitals and a growing local clergy. "It would be difficult," writes Boxer, "if not impossible, to find another highly civilized pagan country where Christianity had made such a mark, not merely in numbers but in influence." (2:321)

Even then, however, a desperate underground missionary effort was kept alive until, under Ieyasu's successors, the hunt for Christians and priests became so systematically ruthless as to wipe out every visible vestige of Christianity. Especially savage was the third Tokugawa, the neurotic Iemitsu--"neither the infamous brutality of the methods which he used to exterminate the Christians, nor the heroic constancy of the sufferers has ever been surpassed in the long and painful history of martyrdom." (2:337)

At first, the most common form of execution was burning. The Englishman, Richard Cocks, describes how he saw

> ...fifty-five persons of all ages and both sexes burnt alive on the dry bed of the Kamo River in Kyoto (October 1619) and among them little children of five or six years old in their mothers' arms crying out, "Jesus receive their souls." (7:172)

Indeed, the executions began to be something of a religious spectacle, one of which Boxer describes as follows:

> This ordeal was witnessed by 150,000 people, according to some writers, or 30,000 according to others and in all probability more reliable chroniclers. When the faggots were kindled, the martyrs said sayonara (farewell) to the onlookers who then began to intone the Magni-

> ficat followed by the psalms Laudate pueri Dominum and Laudate Dominum omnes gentes, while the Japanese judges sat on one side "in affected majesty and gravity, as in their favorite posture". Since it had rained heavily the night before, the faggots were wet and the wood burnt slowly; but as long as the martyrdom lasted, the spectators continued to sing hymns and canticles. When death put an end to the victims' suffering, the crowd intoned the Te Deum Laudamus. (s:342-343)

The Tokugawa Bakufu was not slow to see that such "glorious martyrdoms" were not serving the desired purpose; and bit by bit, death was preceded by torture in a tremendous effort to make the martyrs apostatize. Among these tortures was the ana-tsurushi, or hanging in the pit, which quickly became the most effective means of inducing apostasy:

> The victim was tightly bound around the body as high as the breast (one hand being left free to give the signal of recantation) and then hung downwards from a gallows into a pit which usually contained excreta and other filth, the top of the pit being level with his knees. In order to give the blood some vent, the forehead was lightly slashed with a knife. Some of the stronger martyrs lived for more than a week in this position, but the majority did not survive more than a day or two. (2:354)

A Dutch resident in Japan declared that "some of those who had hung for two or three days assured me that the pains they endured were wholly insufferable, no fire nor no torture equalling their languor and violence." (2:354) Yet one young woman endured this for fourteen days before she expired.

From the beginning of the mission until the year 1632, in spite of crucifixions, burnings, water-torture and the rest, no missionary was apostatized. But such a record could not last, and finally the blow fell. Christovao Ferreira, the Portuguese Provincial, after six hours of agony in the pit, gave the signal of apostasy. His defection being so exceptional might seem of little significance, but the fact that he was the acknowledged leader of the mission made the shock a cruel one--all the more so when it became known that he was collaborating with his former persecutors.

The next setback for Christianity was the Shimabara Rebellion. Caused by the merciless taxation and oppression of the magistrate of Nagasaki, it later became a manifestation of Christian faith, the insurgents carrying banners with the inscription, "Praised be the Most Holy Sacrament," and shouting the names of Jesus and Mary. (5:34) The uprising was put down with ruthless cruelty, and the Tokugawa Bakufu, convinced that such a rebellion could only have been possible with help from outside, decided once for all to cut their ties with Portugal and seal off their country from the world.

Nevertheless, some missionaries tried to enter. There was Marcello Mastrilli, who came partly to make amends for Ferreira and of whom Inoue, the Lord of Chikugo, boasted that he died "an agonizing death, yammering and screaming in the pit." And finally in 1643, came a group of ten (European, Chinese, and Japanese)

among whom was Guiseppe Chiara--Endo's Sebastian Rodrigues. Quickly captured, they all apostatized after long and terrible though most, perhaps all, later revoked their apostasy. Even the Dutch eyewitnesses were moved to compassion by the awful state of their Papist rivals who

> ...looked exceedingly pitiful, their eyes and cheeks strangely fallen in; their hands black and blue, and their whole bodies sadly misused and macerated by torture. These, though they had apostatized from the Faith, yet declared publicly to the interpreters that they did not freely apostatize, but the insufferable torments which had been inflicted upon them forced them to it. (2:393)

Chiara died some forty years after his apostasy, stating that he was still a Christian. As for Christovao Ferreira, about his subsequent life and death not much is known. His grave can still be seen in a temple in Nagasaki, but the record of his burial was burned in the atomic holocaust of 1945. Chinese sailors at Macao testified that prior to his death he had revoked his apostasy, dying a martyr's death in that pit which had previously conquered him, but Dutch residents in Japan say nothing of this. Thus, his death, as much as his life, must forever remain a mystery.

Yet, Christianity's roots had gone too deep to be eradicated. Besides the martyrs, (estimated at some five or six thousand for the period of 1614-1640 alone) thousands of crypto-Christians kept their faith. Through the secret organization described by Mr. Endo, the faith was handed down; baptism was administered; catechism was taught. They gave their names, of course, to their

Buddhist temple; they complied with the order to trample on the sacred image. The procedure was simple: suspect persons were led to some Christian devotional object, such as a bronze plaque bearing a figure of Christ or Mary. Those who refused to step on the image, called a fumie, or "treading picture," were dealt with accordingly.

Today, at Ueno Museum in Tokyo, one can still see those fumie rubbed flat and shining by hundreds of feet that ached with pain while they trampled on someone whom their hearts loved. Handed down, too, was the tradition that the fathers would return, and in 1865, when Japan was reopened, the crypto-Christians came out of their hiding, asking for the statue of Santa Maria, speaking about Christmas and Lent, recalling the celibacy of the priests.

They are still there in their thousands, in Nagasaki and the off-shore islands, clinging tenaciously to a faith that centuries of vigilance could not stamp out. Some of them are united with the world-wide Church; others are not. In their prayers remain smatterings of the old Portuguese and Latin; they preserve pieces of the soutanes and rosaries and disciplines that belonged to the fathers whom they loved; they retain their devotion to Santa Maria. It was while living among these folk that Shusaku Endo wrote the play included in this volume.

Without some historical background, THE GOLDEN COUNTRY might not be easily understood. Nevertheless, the interest this play evoked in Japan was less historical than contemporary. The two foreign apostates were immediately taken as symbols of a Christianity

which has failed in Japan because it is too stubbornly Western. "Father, you were not defeated by me," says the victorious Inoue. "You were defeated by this swamp of Japan." It is precisely this swamp of Japan that cannot absorb the type of Christianity that has been propagated in these islands.

Mr. Endo, in the course of discussions on this drama, often protested that he was writing literature, not theology. Yet on these occasions, many of his remarks showed that he was not indifferent to the theological implications of what he wrote. One is left with the impression that the play is in some way the expression of a conflict between his Japanese sensibility and the Hellenistic Christianity that has been given to him. For example, in an interview recorded in the magazine Kumo, he said:

> I received baptism when I was a child...in other words, my Catholicism was a kind of ready-made suit...I had to decide either to make this ready-made suit fit my body or get rid of it and find another suit that fitted...There were many times when I felt I wanted to get rid of my Catholicism, but I was finally unable to do so. It is not just that I did not throw it off, but that I was unable to throw it off. The reason for this must be that it had become a part of me after all. The fact that it had penetrated me so deeply in my youth was a sign, I thought, that it had, in part at least, become coextensive with me. Still, there was always that feeling in my heart that it was something borrowed, and I began to wonder what my real self was like. This I think is the "mud swamp" Japanese in me. From the time I first began to write novels even to the present day, this confrontation of my Catholic self with the self that lies underneath has, like an idiot's constant refrain, echoed and reechoed in my work. I felt that I had to find some way to reconcile the two. (4:1967)

Endo has, on other occasions, referred to the fact that many so-called Christian intellectuals since Meiji were, in fact Buddhist or nihilist underneath and ended by sloughing off their Christianity in time of crisis. This was because the "mud swamp Japanese" had not allowed them to take into the depths of their being the Christianity that was presented to them. If this Christianity had been less incorrigibly Western, Endo wants to suggest, things might have been different. Elsewhere, Mr. Endo speaks poignantly of this very struggle in his own heart, calling it the peculiar cross that God has given to the Japanese:

> For a long time I was attracted to a meaningless nihilism and when I finally came to realize the fearfulness of such a void I was struck once again with the grandeur of the Catholic Faith. This problem of the reconciliation of my Catholicism with my Japanese blood...has taught me one thing: that is, that the Japanese must absorb Christianity without the support of a Christian tradition nor history or legacy or sensibility. Even though this attempt is the occasion of much resistance and anguish and pain, still it is impossible to counter by closing one's eyes to the difficulties. No doubt this is the peculiar cross that God has given to the Japanese. (4:1967)

Certainly, the tree of Hellenized Christianity cannot simply be pulled out of Europe and planted in the swamp of a Japan that has a completely different cultural tradition. If such a thing is done, the fresh young sapling will wither and die. Yet, this does not mean for Endo that the Christian cause is doomed. Christianity has an infinite capacity for adaptation; somewhere within the great symphony of the faith is a strain that fits the

Japanese tradition and touches the Japanese heart.

> But after all it seems to me that Catholicism is not a solo but a symphony...If I have trust in Catholicism it is because I find in it much more possibility than in any other religion for presenting the full symphony of humanity. The other religions have almost no fullness; they have but solo parts. Only Catholicism can present the full symphony. And unless there is in that symphony a part that corresponds to Japan's mud swamp, it cannot be a true religion. What exactly this part is--that is what I want to find out. (4:1967)

Anyone familiar with modern theology in the West will quickly see that Mr. Endo's thesis is more universal than many of his Japanese readers have suspected. If Hellenistic Christianity does not fit Japan, neither does it, in the opinion of many, suit the modern West. If the notion of God has to be rethought for Japan, so it has to be reconceived for the modern West. If the ear of Japan is eager to catch a strain in the vast symphony, the ear of the West is no less attentive--searching for new chords that will correspond to its awakening sensibilities. All in all, the ideas of Mr. Endo are acutely topical and universal.

Play removed due to copyright restrictions. (The Golden Country Ogon no Kuni by Shusaku Endo)

PART TWO

... Of Nothingness and the Power of the Word

Susan Sontag, in her essay "Against Interpretation," maintains that western civilization's preoccupation with analysis, interpretation, and "true meaning" has stifled experience, at least in the realm of literature. (9:5) As a liberating alternative to "interpretation," Sontag calls for a greater attentiveness to form in art, for the development of a descriptive rather than an analytical and prescriptive vocabulary for forms. (9:13) The goal is "transparence." According to Sontag, "Transparence means experiencing the luminousness of the thing in itself, of things being what they are." (9:13) The author or critic, then, will seek transparence of experience by showing us how our experience "is what it is, even that it is what it is, rather than to show us what it means." (9:14)

Heinrich Ott, although his work is still largely in the programmatic stage, is representative of the same critical stance. In his essay "The Historical Jesus and the Ontology of History," Ott states: "All historical reality which we experience has a picture-like character." (8:160) The image of "picture" suggests a total view which is presented to us, which we interpret immediately and largely unconsciously; and which, if the picture is authentic ("transparent") carries with it immediate convincing power of things being what they are.

By themselves, these descriptions of the quality of reality and its representations are applicable to literature and art in

general, but they bear particular significance for the understanding of Yashiro Seiichi's work as a modern dramatist.

Yashiro Seiichi, author of VANISHED (Yoake ni Kieta) is one of the more important and active playwrights in modern drama in Japan. Born in Tokyo in 1927, he lived there throughout his childhood. Later, he studied French literature at Waseda University. His theater activities in the early nineteen-fifties were closely associated with the prestigious Bangaku-za Troupe in Tokyo. Some of his plays, HAUNTED BY A FOX (Kitsunetsuki), THE CASTLE (Jokan) and PORTRAIT OF A WIFE (Esugata Nyobo), were staged by this troupe. The Seinen-za Troupe which produced VANISHED in 1968 also brought out his other plays, AN ELEPHANT AND A HAIRPIN (Zo to Kanzashi) and A BAT (Komori), in the mid-fifties. He has written close to twenty full-length plays in the shingeki or modern style.

Yashiro avoids projecting reality in an overly realistic manner. For him, the "pictures" are primary; the facts are secondary. His pictures are not the construction of an historian; such constructs, as well as analyses, demythologizations, and objective facts are peripheral. (4:4) The pictures of Yashiro, rather, are the reality itself in the act of making itself known. True enough, themes of love, sin, death, war, money and customs are present in his work as poetic designs. Still, the reality which we encounter in his plays and which impresses itself upon us, and hence has significance for us, constitutes the criterion for what the play is about, what is indeed "real."

Thus, while the dramatic crisis of VANISHED is structured in a conflict between Christian and non-Christian stands and between faith and doubt--as is the crisis of Endo's THE GOLDEN COUNTRY--it would be a mistake to identify the "reality" of VANISHED with that of THE GOLDEN COUNTRY. In the latter, although solid and powerful social institutions may imprison us, impoverish us, lead us to accept torture or kill us, they are fundamentally designed to hold chaos and formlessness at bay. In the former, however, such are, at best, dreams, at worst, madness. While for Endo men have given social definitions, selves, identities matched to incumbent deeds, Yashiro senses that men must constantly invent themselves out of nothing. The experience of nothingness has, for Yashiro, dissolved the pragmatic solidity of life. (7:1-63)

"The experience of nothingness" is a conscious experience, however, not a concept. For Yashiro the experience may be a matter of time, in the novel, time is manipulable: three-spaced periods catapult the reader over hours, days, years, as easily to land him in the future as to land him in the past. It is the novelist's privilege to catch in midflight the present moment, to freeze it, to hold it, to look at it and exploit it until he is satisfied that he has done with it. Then, in his own good time, he will let it resume its flight. Nor is the Moment, once out of his hands, wholly irretrievable. The novelists can recall it, re-establish it as Present, review it, re-use it, and then once more send it back to

its place in the Past. In the hands of the novelist, time is plastic.

The dramatist, however, has no such command over time. He may make time skip a bit between scenes and acts: a ten-minute intermission may represent a day, a year or more. But Lear's line, "What! Fifty of my followers at a clap? Within a fortnight?" does not sit well, for time has been impossibly telescoped here within a single scene.

Moreover, the "direction" of time in the theater tends to be unidirectional and irreversible. It is difficult for the playwright to "stop" time and present on stage an event which both chronologically and causally precedes "stage present." It would seem, indeed, to be almost axiomatic that in the theater, the place is "here," the time "now."

This stage Now is not the elastic present available to the novelist. The content of a moment in one of James' novels may be enormous or it may be slight; it may take pages to describe, or it may take a line or two. The content of a moment on stage is roughly equivalent to any other given moment. Time on stage is regular, rigid. The moments of stage time are, then, like compartments of equal size, and these compartments must be "filled" with the sort of goings-on whose character it is to be so lively, interesting, distracting, that the audience is unaware that time is passing.

Comments on time and the stage such as the foregoing presuppose that time itself is not an appropriate matter to deal with

in the theater. Time is thought of rather as a play's environment or framework; it is a structural element, not a thematic one. The theater may deal with events that happen in time, but the theater is not the vehicle for dealing directly with time. At least, it was not until quite recently.

Yashiro's consciousness, however, is shaped by the fluidity of percepts; undifferentiated time is the medium of his consciousness like a sea on which and in which images float. Still, his timed universe is shaped by the story; beginning, middle, and end are recognizable. He has not been pressed into the madness, chaos, and profound diversity of absolute fluidity as has Sato Makoto in THE HOUR OF THE RAT. The model and shaper of Sato Makoto's alert, discerning consciousness is the camera. The images are not sequential; time is dissolved. The attention of the camera zooms in, flicks ahead, juxtaposes, cuts away, races, slows, flashes back, repeats, spins.

For Yashiro, the model remains that of the person and his center of consciousness, reflexive and reflective. He understands the self to be a center of feeling and thus is drawn to darkness, blood and destruction. It is not time which matters so much, then.

In VANISHED, boredom is the first taste of nothingness. Boredom leads instantly to "killing time." Time must be used up for us to tolerate its measured ordering of life, for Bear reminds us, "When time stops, the path in front of you gets dark. You can't see anything. The light illuminates only the old days already passed." But, for the bored, no action is more attractive than any

other. The self cannot be drawn into action; it lives by and for distractions; it waits. Boredom: the discovery that everything is a game.

> Master was not interested in the matter of faith at all. He didn't pay any attention to that. He didn't have any regular job, but he was busy spending every day idly just playing around. (Scene III)

Lanky spends his time in fanciful combat between Zengakuren activists and the monster Toad-whale, in constructing elaborate strategies for Majong or in keeping memos on the measurements of his lady companions. "Does it mean that Lanky felt something?" Within the dialogue of the play, the answer is "yes," but we know the answer is "no." Short of suicide, Lanky's one bulwark against time-reality is the game sufficiently demanding to hold his attention until death.

Then, there is helplessness. Lanky is an enslaved libertine. Lark's promiscuous sickness has infected her brain. Stingy will never share. Bear is hopelessly coarse. Yellow beats a perpetual retreat. They are trapped, filled with resentment, distrustful, a thousand times betrayed by themselves. For Yashiro, then, it is not the large, impersonal bureaucracy that engenders feelings of helplessness. Neither is it only the feeling that "I have no control over my own life." It is the recognition that those who wield power are also empty, and that I, too, if I had power over my life, am most confused about what I would do with it.

Despite the zealot impulses of Bear and Yellow, the sense of helplessness is not relieved by political power. Power, even pressed

down and running over, does not fill the void; it merely masks it. Lark is right when she says, "We are all broken up, each in his own way." (Scene VII)

A complete phenomenology of the experience of nothingness in our generation, even as understood by Yashiro, is neither possible nor desirable. There are as many ways for that unmistakable experience to break into one's consciousness as there are personal histories. Some feel its touch by way of sickness or disaster, some by way of external event and others by inner breakdown, some in the flush of power and others in irretrievable despair. It is not found at the boundaries of life merely, at the broken places; it comes also from the very center, from the core of joy and pride and dignity.

There is, of course, a strong tradition in the West which holds that whatever problems man has result from the fact that he does not use his Reason. This tradition runs from contemporary Marxist and Christian thinkers back through Hegel and the rationalists of the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries, to the medieval schoolmen, to Aristotle and Plato, to its source in Parmenides. The ground for this tradition is the principle that cosmos and logos are congruent with each other. As Kathleen Freeman observes in her discussion of the pre-Socratic philosophers, "...that which it is possible to think is identical with that which can Be." (3:11,42) However, even among the Greeks, she notes, Parmenidean certitude gave way to Democritean scepticism. "We know nothing in reality;

truth lies in an abyss." (3:CLVI, 106) The cosmos and human understanding are incongruent, incompatible, unharmonious; their relation can be spoken of as absurd, unamable or unintelligible, impervious to reason.

The Greeks dealt with the cosmos in terms of being and non-being, truth and ignorance. The Hebrews dealt with it in terms of life and death, justice and injustice, happiness and misery:

> Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not... For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease...but man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he (Job 14:1-2, 7, 10)

This too is the experience of nothingness, for man would live and be happy, and existence gives him suffering and death.

So the experience of nothingness is not a new idea with Yashiro Seiichi. Nor are the preliminary solutions suggested by Yashiro of particular note. He celebrates Love, but Love has been celebrated in the Romantic tradition as the conqueror of all, even of the last foe, death. In the Stoic tradition, Courage has sometimes been found adequate to carry man through the tribulations of this world, as Yashiro sometimes suggests.

There is also another way with which Yashiro deals with the mess. It lacks the dignity, the pathos, the heroism of the other ways, but it too has worked in the past. Incongruity, the basis for an experience of nothingness, may also be the basis of the

comic, and a metaphysical incongruity is the basis of metaphysical laughter: the laugh that laughs at that which is unhappy.

Yet laughter is not final, either, for in Yashiro's world there is nothing final with men. His world is a syzygy, and for every laugh there is a tear, for every position an opposition, for every thesis an antithesis, for every affirmation a negation. His art is a Democritean art, energized precisely by the dialectical interplay of opposites--body and mind, the self and the other, speech and silence, life and death, hope and despair, yes and no.

Each of his major works is built upon such contraries and oppositions, HAUNTED BY A FOX (Kitsunetsuki) is built upon the opposition of mind and body, reality and illusion; THE CASTLE (Jokan) and PORTRAIT OF A WIFE (Esugata Nyobo), on the relation between knower and known, lover and beloved. A BAT (Komori), in which the effort to be and say what one is is opposed by the inadequacy of language and the nihilating effects of age and experience, continues the design. The contrast in VANISHED seems to be both between Present and Past and between the actuality of the contingent, unauthentic self, complicated further by the reflexive structure of consciousness.

Therefore, through all the works there sounds the anguished plea for peace--the peace that comes with the coincidence of opposites, the surcease of consciousness, the arrest of the dialectic. The pursuit of peace is a spiritual pursuit, and though Yashiro must be recognized as a stylist and craftsman, he is most to be

honored as funambulist of the life of the spirit. For all its mundane obscenity and scatology, his art is ascetic. There is something importantly monastic, eremitic, about his vision, his "picture" of reality.

The driving passion of Yashiro's drama is the yearning to be able to speak responsibly about God. It is Gerhard Ebeling's contention that the word "God" has "subsided into speechlessness, or has been suppressed in superficial talk." (s:47) In the face of this situation, Yashiro Seiichi plays his part in letting the words of his plays rescue God himself from anonymity and pseudonymity by bringing God to linguistic expression.

> Our ancestors in the distant past had weak brains. With weak brains they thought it was unpleasant for other beasts to confuse men with the monkeys. They know they couldn't beat the monkeys at tree-climbing, but they realized they could do better with words. Right! Win a battle with words. There they thought of the word, "God." Although the monkeys are good in scratching, they can't say "God"... Good, let's go with this! Only the human beings can see an invisible God. So, the monkeys and other beasts began to respect the humans for that...(Scene II)

Clearly, the word "God" is not used for its own sake, but in order to save man from choking on his own self because he no longer has any way to call upon the mystery that surrounds him, to gain a place of honor in the universe.

The enormity of our present responsibility toward the world in this matter is driven home as we find Yashiro's characters (and ourselves) caught in the tension between denigrating but substantial nothingness and the open, hopeful but tempestuous, vehemence of our age.

Bear, talking to Slow, calls this dilemma the "Inhuman Swamp" (Scene IV), and we cannot but recall Endo's similar label for Japan, the "insufferable mudswamp," the place of those who hope, --sing and dance in a ring-- knowing peace is a dream and illusion. Slow recalls another story:

> ...I remember listening to a story when I was a child. It is about your people. The blood of your villagers had been dirtied by sucking the blood of a live poisonous snake. If one mixes herself with that blood, her hair will fall out, her eyes will melt, and all over her body black, mottled ugly spots will spread...

The legend is, of course, patently false, but when Bear takes Slow in his arms, she begins to quiver with a fever.

> BEAR: Beast! I wish I could show us to scholars who say with that knowing expression on their faces, "Slaves are as human as we are..." Those pretty-faced fakes...You're shaking. Do you have a pain?...
> SLOW: I feel my body is rotting little by little.

Slow can't believe it, will not accept it, but despite all she would assert of reconciliation and unity in hope and faith, and all Bear would believe of love and acceptance, she cannot counter the feeling of helplessness before the invasion of prejudice and contaminated sentiments.

Man cannot by himself save himself, cannot rescue himself from this condition. Only insofar as we men are caught up in the power of the word of God, as we are caught up on the power, the reality, of God himself--God is "rescued," that is, we are rescued. "If it's just words, anybody can say nice things," Bear contends, but it is precisely that which Yashiro requires us to understand.

In the Word, in words, we are caught up in the reality of God. For Yashiro, as for Buber and Heidegger before him, "word" in the two expressions, "God's Word" and "man's word," refers to the same thing. (1:11; 5:32) It is a fundamental misunderstanding when we conceive of God's Word as being a separate class of word along side the word spoken between men, which is otherwise the only thing we usually call "word." Rather, Yashiro is faithful to the Bible in making God's Word to mean unreservedly word as word--word that is completely normal, human, spoken word. The word is what unites God and man; it is what God and man have in common. As such it is the promise of rescue from nothingness.[c]

That is why the word, and its proclamation, is so central in VANISHED. In conversation, Lanky knows and resents knowing that he is the lost one of whom the Lord speaks and to whom salvation is offered. Slow retains her strength of faith in prayerful communion with her Lord. Language--"just words"--is a meeting. Language given and received, not only describes but bodies forth an encounter.

In Buber's terms, word is essentially a Thou-saying. Word, then, is rightly understood only when it is viewed as an event which --like love--involves at least two. (The constant reference to Slow's love for Lanky, Bear's unrequited love for Slow, and Lark's miserable compulsion to sensual loving, convinces us that love is at lease a paradigm of unification.) Furthermore, the basic structure of word is not statement but apprisal, certainly not in the colorless sense of information, but in the pregnant sense of participation and communication.

The event, however, the word-event, the original relational event which brings reality into being, is the encounter with Jesus of Nazareth. To this meeting all other encounters refer. For Slow, the encounter was with the risen Lord and almost entirely verbal.

> Today I went to the Hill of Golgotha where the Lord was buried to pay my respects and to offer my prayers at the tomb. I knew very well that the Lord was resurrected and that there would be no corpse in the tomb. But, somehow I felt I could possibly hear the precious words of the Lord...and then...Ah, how fortunate I was! I received his command...such gracious words to receive. (Scene II)

She keeps the encounter with Jesus--through his words--alive by the repetition of his stories and parables--his words--, and the repetition, the "text," the words, still carries a potency, a potency of the relational event which brought it into being.

The reality of the relational event reported in the text is not somehow "behind" the text, but in the text; and can only be approached through the text as it becomes luminous in the event of proclamation, whether in sermon, in liturgy, or in some less formal mode of encounter and relationship. When Slow wishes to make it clear that the Lord is extending his redeeming hand even to such troublesome men as Stingy and Yellow and Lanky, she does so by narrating again the story which made the possibility of redemption clear to her.

> ...Let's say there was a man taking care of a hundred sheep. All right? One morning he went to a field with a hundred sheep. Ninety-nine sheep followed obediently. They were good sheep. But one sheep was quite stubborn and independent and ended up lost. A troublesome sheep.

> Then what would the man do?.....If it were you, would you look for the lost sheep, leaving ninety-nine good sheep by themselves?...

In such a way, the description of the event is what is meant; it cannot take place apart from the language that describes it.

If then, the word is what unites God and man, it is also that which in the event of proclamation unites past and present, and which assures us that we will be able to take past and present into the future. In one of the last scenes of the play, Yashiro places Lanky in one corner of the stage in semi-darkness. In another corner a tableau of martyrs crucified and burnt at the stake is constructed. In the face of that impending tragedy, Lanky reads to an old woman from a worn-out book. The woman protests, "If you are caught, you'll be crucified," but Lanky continues, "I'll read where it really gets me." What he reads is of Peter's denial of Christ, constituting a restatement of judgment on even Lanky's paltry allegiance to the Master. He continues, however, to read, "Do not be anxious about tomorrow..."

In the reading, in the present, the word promises continued relationship to the confirmation of meaning (judgment) in the past, thus enabling one to be attentive toward it. The word also promises a continuing relationship to this confirmation of meaning (promise) in a series of successive fulfillments as one goes into the future.

From the beginning of the play, when we first hear the voice of Lanky and begin to hear him read a play which in its reading becomes "reality," until the end, when Lanky says to the Lord, "...you have

already come to live in my soul. Now, Lord, throw me into hell." Yashiro's claim is singular: True existence is existence through word and in word.

We may say, therefore, that the aim of the play is to enable that word to be heard, to take place, which again and again names the truth of the text as being the truth of the event, the "picture" of the speaker's own present concrete situation, the promise of strength to "walk straightforward,"---"A stupendously blessed happening..."

Play removed due to copyright restrictions. (Vanished Yoake ni Kieta by Yashiro Seiichi)

PART THREE

...Of Baths, Brothels and Hell

> Scene: A slope where exhaust from cars speeding along the superhighway and fumes from poorly functioning sewers envelope you. Just at the top of this slope, sandwiched between a small coffee shop and a plateglass store is a murky entrance leading down into the Freedom Theater.

Founded in 1966, with a maximum seating capacity of sixty, the Freedom Theater has become one of the focal points of the young radical theater movement in Japan, showing increasingly conspicuous vigor over the past five years. Besides Sato Makoto's MY BEATLES and MURDER IN OIL HELL, Saito Ren's RED EYES, as well as Megan Terry's VIET ROCK were first performed there. And, in 1970, three new plays--Yamamoto Kiyokazu's BIRDIE-BIRDIE, Saito Ren's TRUST D.E., and then Sato Makoto's THE HOUR OF THE RAT--began performances there at weekly intervals.

Utilizing to the fullest the potentials of this small theater, every week entirely different dramatic arenas are constructed. Especially, for audiences who slowly descend the dark, narrow stairway to see THE HOUR OF THE RAT, a moment of disorientation may be unavoidable. Tatami seating-mats, girthed by bamboo railings, press from three sides upon the performance area spread with taut yellow canvas. There is a Shinto altar hung close to the ceiling and against the fourth black, wooden wall on which is written: "Mixed Bathing." In the middle and at the four corners of the performance area, candles are lighted. If we were to ignore the lighting and sound equipment crowding

like slumbering bats upon the ceiling, the place would seem less like an avant-garde theater than an old playhouse from the days when the memory of drama's connection with religious ritual had not been lost. Needless to say, the resemblance is no coincidence.

Soon it is time. Dressed as of old, a stage-hand appears solemnly. He blows out the candles. The sharp tones of a flute pierce the dark. Three women dressed in the fashion of temple priestesses commence their ritual dance.

> We are the fantasy mingling of reverie and truth
> Who perform the limits of distraction
> Treading the ever-changing dark,
> The wind about us swirls,
> And as lost to ourselves as to the world,
> Into frenzy dance we.

Thus it begins. This ritual dance, the sanbaso, an opening ceremony peculiar to Japanese theatrical gatherings, consecrates a holy night and announces the arrival of a joyous occasion. This overture, which Sato has painstakingly patterened after tradition, is set to chanting voices (5:386-390; 7:57-58), and it forewarns us of the world of THE HOUR OF THE RAT, a world where dream and actuality, light and darkness, the holy and the vulgar are inextricably confused, and where the wildly evil pranks of total irresponsibility are inseparable from deadly serious attempts to assume responsibility for all. But the overture does not stop at this. It is also a song of actors existing as witches and devils in a universe stuck behind our peaceful, everyday lives, where blood is white and the rising sun black. In these terms, THE HOUR OF THE RAT is a sort of "Kawara beggar" declaration (11:12-17) by Sato

and the young theatre people around him.

The wave of new theater mounting over the past several years, with the Freedom Theater as one of its foci, has tried in specifically prescribed ways to pillage Kabuki and Kyogen--the pre-modern tradition of dramatic expression in Japan--for the energy to be found there. THE HOUR OF THE RAT, itself, derives from the incredible deeds of a bandit who actually lived during the last years of the Edo period (1600-1869), an outlaw who ran with the speed of lightning through the night, a thief known by the name of Nezumi Kōzō Jirokichi.

As with the most infamous robbers of any period anywhere, Nezumi Kōzō never failed to post a warning, a challenge to his victims and the authorities in advance of his crime. "By the House of the Rat!"--He would always leave this sort of notice stuck to a ceiling or a door of the house that was his target. It was not only for the substantive reason that the dark of night afforded the best time for his crimes that he chose twelve midnight, but it was also because of the perfectly insubstantial fact that his act would take place, according to the old Japanese method of calculating time, just at the House of the Rat. In this way, he expressed his own sense of humor and gave his crimes a sort of artistic flavor. His black art would be consummated when he stole, just as he had promised, large sums from forewarned nobles' mansions and the storehouses of wealthy merchants. But, that is not all. Within the space of the self-same night, he would stealthily fling his prize into the dwellings of the needy and deprived. Such an anti-establishment figure--seen by the rich as a messenger from

hell, by the poor as an angel of salvation--could hardly have failed to become extremely popular among the masses of people who lived out their lives in the prescribed patterns of a strictly classed society.

The first to take up his exploits were the variety hall raconteurs, travelling balladeers, and authors of illustrated pulp novels. (3:440) Numberless legends were born, and it was no longer possible to distinguish them from reality. Even after the Meiji Restoration (1868), people would not forget Nezumi Kōzō. Akutagawa Ryunosuke, for example, has Nezumi Kōzō appear in one of his darkly provocative short stories as a stocky, reserved middle-aged peddler (1:1), and two of the best dramatists representative of the Meiji period (1868-1912), Kawatake Mokuami and Moyama Seika, both made him the hero of Kabuki scripts. (3:442)

Sato Makoto, in THE HOUR OF THE RAT, has chosen Mokuami's NEZUMI KŌZŌ JIROKICHI as his working base, stealing Mokuami's gimmick of having five "Nezumi's" appear, but the finished work is overwhelmingly different not only from the mounts of his predecessors' work but, most likely, also from the view the original Nezumi Kōzō had held of himself.

The story is familiar to all Japanese. There are four men and one woman--five Nezumi's in all, the same as in Mokuami. They have not been able to create romances of their own lives, but, instead, pray for the arrival of the Hero, copy the Hero's exploits, and finally, in their repressed, imaginary world, unite with him.

A prostitute, an actor, a samurai, a novelist, and a pickpocket: these are the real identities of the five Nezumi's Sato has chosen. Living in sewers and below bridges, this is truly a pact of grey and grimy rats. At a certain point, these people, who had previously led disconnected lives, are suddenly brought together in a shared fate by a single falling star. By casually wishing on the star and praying for release from the bottomless pit of their suffering, they are bound to one another, and when they realize that the star was none other than Nezumi Kozo in one of his many disguises, they are all transformed and become the infamous thief themselves. As far as these new Nezumi's--this new Nezumi-faction--is concerned, there is but one deed to be done. They must steal the avatar of the Lord of the Dawn, who is the sacred "something" attempting to keep them imprisoned in their present state of misery. They stick a notice to the idol inscribed with the words: BY THE HOUR OF THE RAT. With this, their act, provocative and profane, makes straight for the dream of an anarchist revolution lovingly tended in the breasts of homeless vagabonds forced into the lowest reaches of society. The Hour of the Rat of which they warn is the time of the painless revolution which they expect to set the world upon its head.

> Ah, just to strike once, to strike back just once!
> To take the place of God
> And to strike back at all injustice.

Immediately after the end of the opening ritual, the Guardian, charged with protecting the Lord of the Dawn, is faced with a forbidding

omen, revealed by the three priestesses. The Lord of the Dawn's safety is to be direly threatened by a silver pod that is to fall like a comet from the southern sky and the scarlet flames which it will parent.

BO-BO: They're screaming amidst it all, "Aaaaaaaaaa!!!" It's as if the earth itself were trembling, as if the earth itself were waiting. I can hear something crackling. I wonder if that's the sound of human flesh burning.

SO-SO: Dance around midst the flames. Little blue flames. Tens upon tens of thousands. That's right, those are people, people going up in flames.

From the apocalypse the women describe, the silver pod in the context of the play can be nothing other than the atomic bomb which appeared without warning in Japan's midsummer skies of 1945. Of course, contemporary Japanese are often too young to have personal memories, but it is said that the sky on both August 6 and August 15 was clear and blue almost beyond belief. Since that time, most Japanese' image of the end of the war has come to be profoundly connected with that of a cloudless, blue expanse of sky. For example, borrowing the title of one of the arias from MADAME BUTTERFLY, an opera set in Nagasaki, Kato Shuichi has written a novel called ON A CLEAR DAY (Aru Hareta Hi Ni), describing the suffering of young Japanese intellectuals before and after defeat. On a clear day, a silver pod fell like a comet, wreaking a catastrophe of fire like nothing mankind had ever before experienced. But, "at that time, the Lord of the Dawn was absent." The Lord of the Dawn, who was absent on that clear day, is Japan as a nation-state

bound to the emperor-system. Surviving the destruction of the old Japanese Empire, both the emperor-system and Japan as a nation-state have changed their forms and continue most prosperously--almost as if they had not been present at all. They have been adroit at setting distance between themselves and the little, blue flames that consumed human beings.

Sato Makoto selected five rats (Nezumi's) as the heroes of his play, but when he fixed none other than the Lord of the Dawn as the target of their thievery, he also faced the necessity of introducing one more character: the Guardian. The Nezumi's try to steal the Lord of the Dawn; the Guardian tries to preserve his safety and his power. The Nezumi's are pursued by their dream of an anarchist revolution achieved with the help of the "blue and sparkling falling star in the southern sky;" the Guardian is cursed by the nightmare of a fiery catastrophe wrought by "the silver pod glittering in the cloudless sky." But, just as those who dominated Imperial Japan shook with fear at the presentiment of the revolution they were certain would accompany defeat, the Guardian's fears are supported by the warning, "By the Hour of the Rat."

The Guardian, hugging the Lord of the Dawn to his breast, wanders in search of the one place where "peace," as he would have it, is being preserved--the public bath. Facing a crisis, the Guardian sets out for a public bath, hoping to discover there, regardless of the miserable situation he may have left behind him, the continuing possibility of life for the traditional communal spirit.

Like Mishima Yukio who tirelessly demands the revitalization and establishment of the image of the emperor as the investee of the totality of culture (6:86), the Guardian, pressed on by signs of imminent national collapse, seeks in the unsullied hearts of the masses the foundations of the emperor-system as a cultural community.

The public bath, where common people who do not have baths in their homes gather, was a place particularly appropriate to his ambitions. Today, as it has always been, baths are at the center of Japanese communities and hard to miss. There, in the hot, steaming water, people pass the time in pleasant, inconsequential conversation. The feel of the slippery, crusted tub and of its ribbed wooden sides, the good, musty odor of people unrecognizable beneath the vale of steam, the sense of being released from one's harsh individuality: these made the public bath a graphic and powerful symbol of elements within the Japanese spirit which are long and dearly loved, maddeningly changeless and against which it is hard to protest.

The Nezumi's attack, the Guardian defends. And then, to give away the ending, the dream of revolution fails miserably, the nightmare of power aborted is overcome without incident. The "silver pod" threatening the Lord of the Dawn does an about-face and becomes his greatest patron. The three priestesses whom we had expected to be representatives of indigenous deities' dark power change miraculously into three gum-chewing, American-style cats and rout the Nezumi's in hand-to-hand combat. Instead of

announcing the divine oracle with trepidation, they defend the Guardian with the gold-leaf power they possess as "the ones who give." As for the five Nezumi's, at some untold instant, it becomes five minutes after the Hour of the Rat. Before they know it, they have been deprived of the moment of their revolution. The falling star they had seen in the dark of the night might have been perceived to be, had they seen it by the light of day, nothing other than a silver pod.

All of this speaks, of course, to a complicated emotional attitude toward Americans. Nosaka Akiyuki, who visited America for the first time on the occasion of the publication of his novel, THE PORNOGRAPHERS, recalls, in the pages of his travel diary, THOUGHTS OF A JAPANESE NATIVE (Nihon Dojin no Shiso), some of his youthful experiences in this connection.

> Twenty-two years ago, my stomach was empty, and without actually asking them for so much as a stick of chewing gum, I hung precariously to life on American victuals. After that, I bummed off the Americans in any way I could as faithfully as if it had been my mission in life. I filched GI blankets. Those I sold at a good price, but even on the black market, I could get rid of one pair of enormous shoes, and I experienced an almost perverse hatred of the misshapenly flat things. I squeezed money out of the GI's working as a pimp and wandered my way from dealings in second-hand clothing imported from America and in what was supposed to be DDT, to being an errand boy in the army barracks and working in the mess straightening up the left-over food. The time when I could not any longer bum off the Americans was, for me, the end of the post-war period. That was in 1955. (8:63)

The undeniable sense of reality Sato lends to a number of details in THE HOUR OF THE RAT must also be memories of the post-war

years which have seeped down into one who, like Nosaka, grew up through them like a little gray mouse. The scene in which the pickpocket voraciously devours a half-eaten box-lunch he has found in someone's garbage is not merely a piece of conventional theatrical gimmickry demonstrating to an audience the fact that he is hungry. Growing boys in Tokyo during the post-war years have memories of giving the MP's the slip and searching the garbage heaps at the army bases for a little left-over food or of committing similar acts of petty thievery. "Now is the time to steal."

The fact that one of the Nezumi's, the prostitue, is called Jenny is no coincidence either. We can, of course, infer from it the author's original intention to write his own THREEPENNY OPERA with Nezumi Kōzō Jirokichi in the place of Mack the Knife. But, at the same time, this highly un-Japanese name suggests that she was not just a prostitute but what was generally called a "Bang-bang Girl"--a girl especially designated for GI's. Across the burnt land, like obelisks commemorating the Great Defeat, stood the chimneys of the public baths, and along side them were these girls hanging from GI sledge-hammer arms: Pictures branded on the retina of Japanese memory.

The imaginary lover for whom this Jenny waits is also, as in Brecht, someone who is supposed to come to her from across the sea. He is not a romantic pirate but a two-gunned Western hero, "Balls-of-Fire Georgie." And while in her dreams the pirates for whom Brecht's Jenny waits massacre the townspeople who oppress her,

Balls-of-Fire Georgie's victims are, including Jenny herself, the deprived and oppressed little people. The hero eats dreams and vomits nightmares. The book which Jenny reads in one scene of the play, BALLS-OF-FIRE GEORGIE, KNIGHT OF LIBERTY, clearly forecasts in garish pop-art colors the catastrophe the Nezumi's will shortly have to face.

> Bang-bang! Bang-bang! Flame spewed from Georgie's twin pistols. "This is extermination! I am the ally of justice and friend of liberty!...Paleing with fright as they tried to discover where they had made their mistake, one by one the lambs breathed their last...

They had been betrayed. In their attempts to escape a miserable reality, they had simply mistaken the silver pod for a falling star. There is a hopeless gap between their desire "to take the place of God and strike back at all injustice" and Georgie's "This is extermination! I am the ally of justice!..."

The playwright superimposes their disastrous misunderstanding upon the misconception of post-war Japanese people that the American forces had come to liberate them from their "plight." The Japanese Communist Party, immediately after the war, for example, became so ecstatic over the collapse of the Japanese Empire, that they decided that the American forces were to be the liberating armies of the revolution (9:832-833) and, whether tragic or comic, they shouted banzai's for General MacArthur. Teachers ordered their students to black out militaristic passages in textbooks and applied themselves to the pedagogy of American-style freedom and democracy--a new Justice.

Mothers no longer threatened unruly children with the Emperor's wrath--it was with General MacArthur's name that children were scolded. But, suddenly, it's five minutes after the Hour of the Rat. The dream of revolution is replaced with something or other else, and before the people know it, they are built into the structure of American cold war defense. The Guardian shrieks with laughter and points triumphantly towards a Roman bath in Atami, a popular hot-springs resort, big enough for a thousand people. He has found the closest thing, perhaps, to a bath big enough for the entire nation. His high laughter is based on the "miracle abundance" of Japan, the economic giant, which had been reconstructed while protected beneath America's nuclear umbrella, thanks to the economic opportunities provided by America's wars in Korea and Vietnam.

Yet, if we are limited to this interpretation--tightly enmeshed in the years when modern men were growing up--THE HOUR OF THE RAT and the world it describes become altogether one-dimensional. The plot line which we have been drawing until now, based on the antagonism between the Guardian and the Nezumi's, is only the uppermost of the play's several layers. What really makes the play superior is not the dramatic progress and development of this structure of antagonism, but the playwright's awareness of the tendency in it toward over-simplification and his attempts to delve deep beyond it. Reality is so complicated that there is little hope for polarizing it into enemies and friends, victimizers and victims.

Sato has chosen to build his play around the antagonism between the Nezumi's and the Guardian, and he has also tried to make that play into his own personal experience. The play as a whole, however, the medium supporting these two elements, is neither a flavoring of the Nezumi Kōzō legend with the sharp spices of our world nor the relation in simple and easily understood terms of allegories on modern history. No such compromise. Sato Makoto seems almost to refuse to recognize his time as separate from that of Nezumi Kōzō. That time bursts into Sato's recounting of contemporary history and devastates dramatic structure.

The public bath, as we have suggested, is a symbol of the sense of community consistent in Japanese society, but the "public bath" in Sato's play does not stop there. The leading character in his previous work, MURDER IN OIL HELL, was a man who worked painting scenes on tile bathhouse walls, and in Kara Juro's VIRGIN MASK (Shojo Kamen) a bathtub suddenly appears on the stage. The use of the bath in THE HOUR OF THE RAT is by far the most exhaustive. More than being a single, cleverly contrived device symbolizing a theory of culture, the bath itself demands to be viewed as a constructive miniature of that culture as a continuous whole.

In every corner of the play, bathhouse metaphors are cluttered, and we are induced, thus, to feel that the whole play might, in fact, be taking place within the confines of the public bath. Productions have only served to reinforce this impression.

"MIXED BATHING," we have mentioned, is written in bold letters on the back wall of the performance area. In baths of the Edo period, there were broad parlors where customers getting out of the bath could sit and drink, and where "bath girls" (yuna) were to be found. While the bath was the center of the community's healthy social life, it was also a handy, carnival institution directly connected with liquor and sex. Although mixed bathing was prohibited rather early, what it meant was merely that a thin partition was built across the bathroom. Along with the bath girls, brawny men called Sansuke were also available to scrub women's backs, and onnagata, men who played women's roles in Kabuki, were also tacitly permitted in the women's side. (10:303: 17:169)

The bath, being this sort of institution, was not only where individuals washed; it was also where the community as a body could be cleansed. In the heavy steam where people faced each other divested of all but that with which they were born, even distinctions between social classes became obscured. Clutching the Lord of the Dawn, the Guardian enters the bath, and the scene might well be compared to a completely ludicrous one in Kijima Hajime's short story, KEMURI-YU, where the Emperor suddenly appears stark naked in a public bath amidst groups of men exchanging bits of small talk. The bath presides over a warm confusion where system and anarchy, normal and festive, male and female, up and down, society and nature--where all conflicts and contrasts--are neutralized into a vague

monochrome. One of Kimima's characters murmurs, "In a bathhouse one abides by bathhouse rules." In the bath, all order is confused and at times even set upside down. But it is, in fact, through this rule-governed defiance of the system that the life of the community is refreshed and renewed. There is a delicately balanced relationship between the destructive and conservative elements of society epitomized by the bath.

Sato has set the dramatic conflict between the Guardian and the Nezumi's in the context of the bathhouse. But here, it seems, mixed bathing is openly abetted, and consequently the balanced relationship between eros and law is endangered. The Nezumis' time, determined by the rhythm of their dream of revolution, and the Guardian's time, in tune with the terror-ridden presentiment of imminent disaster, which might well be expected to be in direct confrontation, simple dissolve here, intermingle with no sense of before or after, progress never meeting, and collapse in a single chaos where they are forced to fuse together.

To effect this fusion, the scene of the Nezumi's partaking of a meal as they surround a boiling cauldron has been prepared. Having been eating nothing but turnips, they are treated to a protein-rich meal of meat. In reality, the "meat" is the triplet girls born of Hooker Jenny. At the instant they realize this, they are Nezumi Kōzō; they are soldiers of the Second World War prepared to sacrifice their lives for the Lord of the Dawn. With the Rising Sun upon their foreheads, they are Kamikaze pilots.

In his book, THE ETHNOLOGY OF THE CLOWN (Doke no Minzokugaku), Yamaguchi Masao, using as examples banquet scenes from plays like HARLEQUIN, SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS from Piccolo Teatro (12:87), touches on the particular symbolic significance attributed to the meal by the popular imagination. Generally speaking, the meal is an act of heightened sensuality followed immediately by a rapid reversal of fate. Such is certainly the case in THE HOUR OF THE RAT. The Nezumi's' satiety soon turns to nausea. Their untimely banquet provides them with the momentum that carries them from what was to them normalcy into a highly abnormal state of affairs. As with all banquets, theirs supplies them with the "right to madness." The playwright opens their banquet at the bottom of the hell into which they have been dragged by the three women. From the gaiety of their meal, the dark entrance to hell gapes at them. The bubbling cauldron about which they arrange themselves is doubtless the cauldron of hell set and ready to punish the damned.

But one thing more. The Japanese word for hell, jigoku, is also argot for both prostitues themselves and their brothels. (5:47) It is thus no coincidence that, in the second version of THE HOUR OF THE RAT, this banquet was conducted concurrently with an orgiastic brothel sleep-in. The bath, the brothel, the banquet "hell": to a great extent these three loci encompass the mad moments of life. Here the established order is set upside down. In THE HOUR OF THE RAT these three places, each under the suzerainty of Evil, are united.

The banquet begins. The Nezumi's who have partaken of the flesh of the new-born triplets in madness spin back through post-war years to the start of World War Two. They are transformed into the loyal sons and daughters of the Great Japanese Empire, take their aim on what is neither a "silverpod" nor a "falling star" but a "silver falling star," and fly off for the final surprise attack. Birth begets death; death begets birth; and birth begets death again. What is emphasized by this endless repetition is not that we will someday know the joy of rebirth. No, emphasized are the negative elements of our history, its repressed, black contours. Emphasized is death as a cultural institution.

At the end of their long fall through the murky tunnel of post-war history, just when they have begun to partake of the long-awaited feast, they are thrown back to the very beginning all over again. That is Sato's vision of hell; the Nezumi's are its demons. Those who partake of human flesh become living demons. Like the young pilots who vowed to "die and become demons to protect Japan" before them, they depart to dive-bomb their lives into enemy ships.

What we had thought to be a summary of post-war history, then, may have been, in reality, events within a dream, dreamed and flashed forward in time by the youths who twenty years before had died and been transformed into demons. From this point of view, it is not that the Nezumi's have been spun back through time to the place from which they started, but rather that the demons, at this instant, have awakened from their dream of five Nezumi Kōzōs.

Throughout the play, the Nezumi's continue to groan that they cannot die, but this could not possibly mean that they cannot deny their own existences. No one can die in a dream and, furthermore, demons who have already died once cannot a second time. As the Nezumi's are living through currents of time that eternally flow back to death, they could never have been antagonists, pure and simple, to the Guardian.

> Take it off--take the clock off! It's heavy. It's so damned heavy. Please...Mother...take it off, take it off my back...Please, Mother...Mother! At this rate it will be the Hour of the Rat forever! Mother!

The Guardian, too, like the Nezumi's, just as he has sung the praises of the prosperous days he and the Lord of the Dawn have met with, is flung back to death at the beginning.

This is the last incident of the play. It is here that, for the first time, if only for an instant, the Nezumi's' time and that of the Guardian meet. This, though, is an instant which will last forever. It is not because this is the instant they have hopefully awaited and fearfully anticipated, not because it is any sort of eschaton. At this moment, the workings of madness, that perverted wisdom, reveal to us that the Guardian's clock is forever to read exactly the Hour of the Rat and that for the Nezumi's it is eternally to be five minutes too late, five minutes past that hour. Madness makes two separate times, five minutes apart, eternally contemporaneous.

What sort of history is it the rhythms of which neither revolution nor nuclear war can affect? Amid the dull continuity that paces these rhythms, what sort of action is available to us? Jenny stabs the Guardian to death, but actually nothing has happened. Nevertheless, we cannot help thinking of her violent act--less, perhaps, because of its meaning than because of its desperation--as something close to political agitation calling for the immediate rupture of that continuity which damns us.

In analyzing Marx's language, Jacques Ellul discovered a tendency to discuss the revolution not as a necessity to be achieved within time limits but as an "imminence." He goes on to comment that if revolution is to carve time, cross-section it, and persist as a requirement of life, then the refusal to enjoy respite itself must be the single characteristic of the revolution. "We need every spark of defiance and self-assertion we can muster, a new spirit whole distinct from traditional individualism." (2:141) It seems that by placing this pathetic scene at the end of his play, Sato has tried to call back, once again, the revolution which should always remain alive, promised neither by calendars nor stars, into our precarious lives--be they stopped forever on or forever five minutes past the hour.

Play removed due to copyright restrictions. (The Hour of the Rat Nezumi Kozo by Sato Makoto)

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Assumptions

1. Arnheim, Rudolph. VISUAL THINKING. London: Faber and Faber, 1970.
2. Barrett, William. WHAT IS EXISTENTIALISM? New York: Grove Press, 1964.
3. Bronowski, Jacob. "The Discovery of Form," in STRUCTURE IN ART AND SCIENCE, ed. Gyorgy Kepes. New York: Braziller, 1965.
4. Cassirer, Ernst. AN ESSAY ON MAN. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944.
5. Cassirer, Ernst. THE PHILOSOPHY OF SYMBOLIC FORM, trans. Ralph Manheim. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953.
6. Frye, Northrup. THE MODERN CENTURY. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967.
7. Hegel, George Wilhelm Friedrich. ON ART, RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY, ed. J. Glen Gray. New York: Harper and Row, 1970.
8. Karsh, Yousef. FACES OF OUR TIME. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.
9. Kirby, Michael. "The Art of Time: The aesthetics of the Avante-Garde," THE ART OF TIME. New York: Dutton, 1969.
10. Langer, Susanne K. FEELING AND FORM. New York: Scribners', 1953.
11. Overy, Paul. KANDINSKY, THE LANGUAGE OF THE EYE. London: Elek, 1969.
12. Read, Herbert. THE CONTRARY EXPERIENCE: AUTOBIOGRAPHIES. London: Faber and Faber, 1963.
13. Read, Herbert. "The Arts and Peace," in TO HELL WITH CULTURE. New York: Schoken, 1963.
14. Tolstoy, Leo. WHAT IS ART? AND ESSAYS ON ART, trans. Alymer Maude. New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1960.

II. Statement of Purpose

1. Hesse, Hermann. STEPPENWOLF, trans. Basil Creighton, Walter Sorell. New York: Modern Library, 1963.

PART ONE

--Of Mudswamps and Martyrdoms

1. Anesaki, Masaharu. HISTORY OF JAPANESE RELIGION. London: Kegan Paul, 1930.

2. Boxer, C. R. THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY IN JAPAN 1549-1650. Berkeley: University of California Press.

3. Endo, Shusaku. SILENCE. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1969.

4. Endo, Shusaku. "Japanese Catholic Novelist," an interview in THOUGHT, Winter, 1967.

5. Fairbanks, John K., Edwin O. Reischauer, Albert M. Craig. EAST ASIA: THE MODERN TRANSFORMATION. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1965.

6. Reischauer, Edwin O., John K. Fairbanks. EAST ASIA: THE GREAT TRADITION. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1960.

7. Sansom, G. B. THE WESTERN WORLD AND JAPAN. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951.

8. Tsunoda, Ryusaku, William T. dePary, Donald Keene. SOURCES OF THE JAPANESE TRADITION. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958.

PART TWO

--Of Nothingness and the Power of God

1. Buber, Martin. I AND THOU, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith. New York: Charles Scribner's, 1958.

2. Ebeling, Gerhard. WORD AND FAITH, trans. James W. Leitch. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963.

3. Freeman, Kathleen. ANCILLA TO THE PRE-SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHERS: A COMPLETE TRANSLATION OF THE FRAGMENTS. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1957.

4. Harvey, Van A. THE HISTORIAN AND THE BELIEVER. New York: Macmillan, 1966.

5. Heidegger, Martin. ESSAYS IN METAPHYSICS: IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE, trans. Kurt F. Leidecher. New York: Philosophical Library, 1960.

6. Moltmann, Jurgen. THEOLOGY OF HOPE, trans. James W. Leitch. London: SCM Press, 1967.

7. Novak, Michael. THE EXPERIENCE OF NOTHINGNESS. New York: Harper and Row, 1970.

8. Ott, Heinrich. "The Historical Jesus and the Ontology of History," in THE HISTORICAL JESUS AND THE KERYGMATIC CHRIST, Carl E. Braaten and Roy A. Harrisville, eds. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1964.

9. Sontag, Susan. AGAINST INTERPRETATION. New York: Dell, 1961.

PART THREE

--Of Baths, Brothels and Hell

1. Akutagawa, Ryunosuke. YABU NO WAKA. Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1965.

2. Ellul, Jacques. AUTOPSY OF A REVOLUTION, trans. Patricia Wolf. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971.

3. Kawatake, Mokuami. "Nezumi Kozo Jirokichi," in Aubrey S. and Giovanni M. Halford. THE KABUKI HANDBOOK. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1956.

4. Keene, Donald. ANTHOLOGY OF JAPANESE LITERATURE. New York: Grove Press, 1960.

5. Miller, Roy Andrew. THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967.

6. Mishima, Yukio. SUN AND STEEL, trans. John Bester. New York: Grove Press, 1970.

7. Nakamura, Yasuo. NOH: THE CLASSICAL THEATER, trans. Don Kenny. New York and Tokyo: Walker-Weatherhill, 1971.

8. Nosaka, Akiyuki. NIHON DOJIN NO SHISO. Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1968.

9. Reischauer, Edwin O., John K. Fairbanks. EAST ASIA: THE MODERN TRANSFORMATION. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1965.

10. Scott, A. C. THE KABUKI THEATER OF JAPAN. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1956.

11. Tsuno, Kaitaro. "Biwa and Beatles," in CONCERNED THEATER JAPAN, October, 1969.

12. Yamaguchi, Masao. THE ETHNOLOGY OF THE CLOWN (Doke no Minzoku-gaku). Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1964.